

Approved For Release 2005/01/11 : CIA-RDP88-01314R000100470012-1

5 July 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Executive Director

VIA: The Director of Security

1. This memorandum contains a recommendation in Paragraph 7.
2. The attached article, "I Spied on Castro's Cuba," in the April 1963 issue of EBONY, was based on an authorized interview, and the article was cleared by the Security Review office of the Department of Defense.
3. After the October TV press conference of Secretary McNamara, a press conference was held at Homestead Air Base in Florida, with the approval of the government agencies involved from the White House down. The feature of this press conference was Captain Thomas L. Hennagan, 363rd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, a young Negro pilot who was of great human interest, not only because of the successful mission he accomplished, but because he is a Negro.
4. EBONY was not represented at the press conference. EBONY is published at 1820 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago 16, Illinois, by the Johnson Publishing Company. John H. Johnson is Editor and Publisher. It is a monthly with a circulation of 650,000. It is a Negro picture magazine covering features of general interest. It has a Washington, D.C., office headed by Simon Booker at 1526 G Street, N.W. It sells for 35 cents a copy. EBONY protested to the Air Force and to the Department of Defense and requested an interview with Captain Hennagan. The Department of Defense approved the request and made Captain Hennagan available for an interview, on the condition that the copy would be cleared. It was cleared.
5. It would be futile and most unwise to ask the Press not to run such human interest stories. There is also the viewpoint of the military services to get favorable publicity in peacetime on exploits that bring credit to the services as a whole and to the individuals who perform them. In this instance, by clearing the request of EBONY, the DOD kept that important Negro magazine happy, and satisfied Security requirements by examining the copy prior to publication, a procedure that EBONY agreed to, but one they did not have to agree to.
6. My answer to the question by Mr. Elder, "What can be done to stop such things?" is for the Director to take action to stop these stories at their source if he deems such action necessary. I foresee considerable difficulty in making them an action agreeable to the military services or to the Press.
7. Recommendation: That the Director take no formal action in this matter.

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Attachment

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Assistant to the Director